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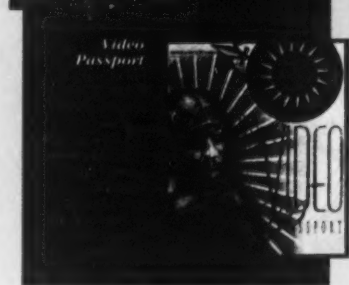
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LIBRARY MARKET OUTLOOK

Music CDs Heading to the Top of the Library Charts

Libraries will be spending 57 percent of their music audio budgets on compact discs (CDs) this fiscal year, compared to three percent on LPs and 40 percent on audiocassettes, according to a recent *Library Journal* survey. *LJ* surveyed 1000 public libraries to see how music collections are evolving, and if this form of entertainment is still a staple of patron use.

The total materials budgets of libraries responding range from \$10,000 to over \$1 million. These libraries are currently spending 75 percent of their budgets on books and nine percent on audiovisual programs.

A shortened life for LPs

Libraries expect to increase their expenditures on music CDs to 61 percent of the total music audio budget in the next fiscal year. Though most libraries collecting music audio currently have more LPs than any other format (average of 2,708 LPs to 1,727 cassettes and 1,132 CDs), 88 percent have begun to phase out their LP collections in favor of the newer formats.

The increase in CD purchases is due predominantly to increased patron demand—an 88 percent increase for music CDs over other formats. Said one respondent, "We have a large LP collection, but demand is increasing for CDs and future demand looks high." Said another, "As we build our CD collection, we are weeding the LPs. Their circulation has decreased quite a bit over the years while CDs are booming."

When buying new programs or replacing LP versions, libraries often choose CDs because of their current affordability. Most librarians have also found CDs to be superior to LPs and cassettes in terms of sound quality and durability (88 percent).

A harmonious collection despite cuts

The current recession will certainly affect how well libraries can meet demand. Fifty-six percent of libraries responding have experienced some budget cuts in the current fiscal year and 61 percent of those libraries lost money from their audiovisual col-

fers. Libraries indicated that when buying CDs, discounted CDs are a first choice. But more money will be spent on music CDs if necessary to comply with user requests. One librarian also noted, "We try to budget to meet demand and plan in advance. But we may transfer some video money to CD just because of space considerations."

Most of the respondents (52 percent) feel their collections should be well balanced and offer a broad spectrum of music types. The collections surveyed include classical, jazz, pop/rock, country, and R&B music with lesser coverage of international, folk, New Age, and show music.

The largest percentage (84.5 percent) of libraries that collect music audio use the same lending policy for CDs as for books. Some libraries (7.5 percent) limit the number of CDs that can be borrowed at any time; only 1.1 percent say they charge patrons a fee to borrow CDs. For some specifics on CD collection development, see Bruce Connolly's "Boxed Sets" on p. 46.

Percent of Libraries with Music Audio Budgets in FY91/92

TOTAL MATERIALS BUDGET

Audio Budget	\$10,000– 24,999	\$25,000– 49,999	\$50,000– 99,999	\$100,000– 249,999	\$250,000– 499,999	\$500,000– 999,999	\$1 million or more
\$0	8.3	13.5	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Less than \$500	45.8	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\$500–999	12.5	26.9	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
\$1,000–2,499	12.5	36.5	40.0	20.5	9.1	11.1	0.0
\$2,500–4,999	4.2	0.0	30.0	36.4	0.0	0.0	12.5
\$5,000–7,499	0.0	1.9	10.0	18.2	22.7	11.1	25.0
\$7,500–9,999	0.0	0.0	2.5	6.8	13.6	0.0	12.5
\$10,000 or more	4.2	0.0	0.0	9.1	45.5	44.4	50.0

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